## edit

ivil Services forms a basis

of Government without

which there is no admin-

employed in civil occupations. They act as the main channel

to articulate people's needs and

implement government policies

on the ground. They provide

the necessary inputs, identify

policy areas, analyse various al-

ternatives, offer multiple solu-

tions to societal issues and give

robust advice to the ministers.

policy makers and legislators.

Fostering a culture of transpar-

ency and accountability is cru-

cial to reduce corruption and

to promote good governance.

Corruption within civil servic-

es if any, where public officials

misuse their positions for per-

sonal gain, undoubtedly under-

mines governance, social-jus-

forms like demanding bribes or

misusing of public funds. Inspite

of defective laws but endowed

with committed and competent

civil servants at the helm it's pos-

sible to ensure effective govern-

ance. But with bad civil servants

around, even the best laws can-

not help. Corruption erodes pub-

Corruption can take various

tice, and the public trust.

# O HERALDO

# **OHERALDO** The Voice of Goa - since 1900 **People lose when** institutions clash

The Supreme Court's landmark verdict of April 8, which laid down time-bound guidelines for Governors and even the President to act on Bills passed by state legislatures, has stirred an unprecedented constitutional debate. What should have been a moment for introspection about strengthening democratic processes has instead become the latest flashpoint between two vital arms of the state — the judiciary and the political executive.

The apex court's ruling, which held that indefinite delays by Governors in assenting to Bills was unconstitutional, stemmed from a writ petition by the Tamil Nadu government. In its judgment, the Court rightly observed that such inaction violates the principles of parliamentary democracy and sets a dangerous precedent. Importantly, it set timelines for Governors and the President to act under Articles 200 and 201, thereby attempting to close a loophole that had long allowed constitutional paralysis by omission.

The judgment was careful not to amend the Constitution or impose automatic assent, but to clarify that constitutional silence should not be interpreted as licence for procrastination. Judicial activism, perhaps but the Court asserted it was compelled by necessity, not ambition. Yet, the sharp reaction from Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar — who termed the judgment a "nuclear missile" against democratic forces — marks a troubling turn in this debate.

It is one thing for political leaders and legal experts to question a judicial pronouncement. In fact, dissent and debate are intrinsic to a vibrant democracy. But when constitutional functionaries like the Vice President, who is also the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, take to public forums to lambast the judiciary in unfiltered terms, it

### By criticising the judgment so sharply and so publicly, the Vice President has added fuel to a fire that required constitutional sobriety

does not bode well for democratic harmony. President Vice Dhankhar's remarks go beyond the usual bounds of criticism. Referring to judges as "super Parliament" and accusing them of appropriating

executive functions undermines not just the judgment in question but also the very principle of separation of powers. Such comments blur the institutional decorum expected from someone who is meant to rise above political fray and embody constitutional impartiality.

Speakers of legislatures and Vice Presidents, by their very position, are expected to act as impartial custodians of the Constitution. While they may have prior political affiliations, once elevated to these roles, their actions and utterances are supposed to reflect statesmanship, not partisanship. The public spectacle of constitutional authorities sparring with each other diminishes institutional credibility and erodes the citizen's faith in governance.

The issues raised by critics of the judgment whether the Court overstepped its bounds, whether the President's immunity under Article 361 has been compromised, or whether the use of Article 142 was appropriate — are all valid concerns in a constitutional democracy. But these should be raised through proper legal avenues, such as a judicial review or a review petition, rather than through sweeping public pronouncements. Unfortunately, the current discourse has veered into the terrain of confrontation rather than consultation. By criticising the judgment so sharply and so publicly, the Vice President has added fuel to a fire that required constitutional sobriety. It is entirely possible to disagree with the Supreme Court while still maintaining institutional decorum. Several legal experts have indeed done so — offering measured critiques of the potential implications of this judgment, including concerns about judicial overreach and lack of representation from the Executive's side during hearings. That said, the spirit of the Court's order cannot be ignored. Delays in granting assent to Bills passed by elected legislatures, without communication or justification, clearly undermine the legislative process. The Governor's office is not meant to function as an alternate political power centre. The Constitution envisages Governors as constitutional figureheads who act on the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers, not as veto-holding overseers. If anything, this judgment was a response to a vacuum — a situation where democratic processes were being held hostage by institutional inertia. The Court stepped in to assert that governance cannot be stalled by silence, and that accountability must extend to every branch of the state. Whether its method was perfect is open to debate, but its motivation seems aligned with constitutional principles. It is ironic that a judgment aimed at resolving a constitutional impasse has now resulted in another. The need of the hour is for mature dialogue between institutions, not a war of words. Respectful disagreement is the hallmark of a functioning democracy; personal attacks are not. India's constitutional democracy has survived and thrived because of the mutual respect its institutions afford each other. That delicate balance must not be disturbed in the heat of the moment. Constitutional functionaries, more than anyone else, must lead by example — by choosing civility over confrontation, dialogue over denunciation.



Services in the 21st century istration. Civil servants are officials in the executive wing and are essential for the functioning of government. It is the body of government officials who are

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forms like demanding bribes or misusing of public funds. Inspite of defective laws

but endowed with committed and competent civil servants at the helm it's possible to ensure effective governance



lic trust in government and its hallowed institutions; making it extremely difficult to implement public policies and people oriented services.

The role of civil servants is crucial in building a strong and prosperous nation. Our nation is defined by its people, not by its borders. We count on our civil servants to uphold this spirit and serve with integrity, dedication and empathy. A competent and dedicated civil service guarantees a stronger nation. The IAS cadre is responsible for formulating and implementing government policies. It is the permanent and reliable arm of the Government of India and the state governments. Civil Services are the pivot of the government which ensures its seemless administration. Satyendranath Tagore, the elder brother of Rabindranath Tagore, was the first Indian to be selected for the Indian Civil Services (ICS) in the year 1863. The cabinet secretary is arguably India's most powerful bureaucrat and the right hand of the Prime Minister of India. Civil services play an essential role in the Administration, policy formulation, and implementation of democracy. There are three prominent pillars of democracy: The Legislative, the Executive, and the Judiciary. The civil service forms an important section of the Executive among these three pillars. The Executive consists of ministers and civil servants. The ministers are temporary in a democracy as they are replaced and re-elected after a fixed period of time in a democracy, but civil servants are a permanent part of the Executive. In a parliamentary democracy like India, the Council of Ministers (CoM), i.e., of a Union or a State cabinet are responsible for the Administration of Government and policymaking. However, it is the role of Civil Service in a democracy to advise CoM regarding the Administration of the Government policymaking and implement the laws made by CoM. And by providing necessary insights about the pros and cons to the

The legitimacy of Civil

ministers. Indira Gandhi is credited to have taken a more engaging and critical view on the importance of the Civil services in governance than her father. She was one of the first leaders after independence who initiated revolutionary changes on the administration. Upon completing 100 days in office during her first term as Prime Minister she declared: "The problem of administration has added to the difficulties of the country. All along the line, the administration has deteriorated - at the centre, at the state, and even in the lower rungs of the government set up. Toning up would have to be done, new procedures might have to be evolved and, even fresh recruitment at all levels would have to be considered." Restructuring of ICS happened in the year 1947 when it was named as the Indian Administrative Service (IAS)

The officers in the civil services form the permanent staff of the various governmental departments. They are basically experts as administrators. They are sometimes referred to as the bureaucracy or also the public service. Interestingly, as the world accelerated towards fast paced changes, as a result of social activism, technological advancement and decentralization, the aspirations of the public has also arisen alongside crying for better administration, demanding effective service-delivery and transparency from the governments. The civil services, an integral part of the government are therefore required to fulfil the aspirations of the people. However, the quality of public services delivered to the Indian people have failed to match up with their ever growing expectations. Very few will disagree with this observation. During an event to observe 'Vigilance Awareness Week', Officers of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the country's premier investigating agency, CBI, stated that they have been comparatively jobless in Goa since it does not receive any complaints of corruption. Offices like customs, income tax, banks, GST, Goa Shipyard, MPT and other public sector undertakings come under their surveil-

lance. "The tolerance to corruption among people of Goa is very high. We are sitting idle, as if there is not a single complaint of bribery or disproportionate assets in the state against officers". Recently however, the Chief Secretary of Goa Puneet Kumar Goel was exposed for purchasing an illegal bungalow at Aldona for Rs 2.36 crore which was built illegally after the alleged conversion of 1,875 sq.mts. on agricultural property. Upon investigating, the land was found to be a paddy field, with no possibility of building any construction on that agricultural field. What was surprising was that he made notings on the file of the land he himself bought with impunity.

The state government generally holds the power to suspend both IAS and IPS officers, especially for misconduct within the state. While the state government has the primary authority, the central government plays a role in confirming the suspension order and in disciplinary matters for all India service officers. Article 311 of the Indian Constitution places procedural restrictions on the government's power to dismiss, remove, or reduce the rank of civil servants. This article provides civil servants with vital safeguards against arbitrary or unjust actions, ensuring that they are not dismissed without 'due process'. The President of India is the appointing authority for IAS, IPS and IFS officers. Therefore, according to Article 311(1), only the President can dismiss or remove these officers

National Civil Service Day 2025 is celebrated today to acknowledge and appreciate the vital role of civil servants in India's governance and development. The date holds special relevance because it marks the day when India's first home minister Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel addressed the new Administrative Services Officers in 1947 and referred to them as the "Steel Frame of India". The commonly attributed motto of the Civil Service, particularly in the context of India, is "Excellence in Action".

This motto emphasizes the importance of efficiency, effectiveness, and high standards in the performance of duties by these civil servants who are focused on honing their skills and being innovative. Additionally, it provides the Central Government with an opportunity to evaluate the performance of various departments operating under the civil services umbrella as well as award the best-performing individuals and groups within the civil services by recognizing their outstanding contributions to public service and governance by the Indian Prime Minister. On Civil Services Day, which is April 21st, we recognize the vital role of civil servants in nation-building and reflect on meaningful quotes like "The civil servant is a human being who serves his country with honesty, integrity, and dedication". (The writer a social scientist and is a senior practicing criminal lawyer)

## people'sedit

## **EASTER MONDAY OF HOPE AND MISSION**

**MOLLY FERNANDES** 

In the Catholic Church, Easter Monday is also called "Monday of the Angel" in relation to the announcement of the Resurrection of Jesus. While, in the Eastern Orthodox Church and Byzantine Rite Catholic Churches, this day is called "Bright Monday" or "Renewal Monday"

Bright Monday - to signify the joy and celebration after Easter Sunday and Renewal Monday - emphasizes the renewal of life and the start of a new season following the resurrection of Jesus.

One of the most touching moments of the resurrection story unfolds when Mary Magdalene visits the tomb early in the morning (John 20:11-18). Her heart is heavy with grief as she approaches, determined on anointing Jesus' body. But instead, she finds the stone rolled away and the tomb empty. In her despair, she encounters a man she initially mistakes for the gardener. When He calls her by name, saying, "Mary," she suddenly recognises Him.

Overcome with emotion, Mary moves closer to Him. Yet Jesus gently tells her, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." (John 20:17)

This moment captures the essence of Easter Monday. While Mary's instinct is to remain with Jesus, He reminds her that the resurrection is not only for her but for the humanity. Jesus commissions her to share the good news with His disciples, entrusting her with the first announcement of His resurrection (Mission).

Easter Monday invites us to step into Mary Magdalene's shoes - to carry the message of hope and renewal to others. The resurrection is not just an event to be celebrated but a truth that transforms how we live. It challenges us to express Christ's love in our daily lives, serving as His witnesses in both word and action.

In this sense, Easter Monday becomes a bridge between celebration and mission. It calls us to reflect deeply on the meaning of the resurrection and to live out its message in our relationships, communities, and work.

Mary's encounter with the risen Jesus also speaks to those who have experienced loss or uncertainty. At the tomb, her sorrow turns to joy, as she realises that Jesus has defeated death. This transformation echoes the message of Easter that even in our darkest moments, the resurrection promises hope and new beginnings.

This hope is beautifully expressed in Paul's words: "Death has been swallowed up in victory... Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 15:54-57). Easter Monday reminds us that the victory of life over death is not only a theological truth but a living reality that sustains us through life's challenges.

When Jesus instructs Mary to tell His disciples, He adds that they will meet Him in Galilee - a place that holds deep significance in His ministry. Galilee symbolises both the ordinary and extraordinary aspects of life. It is the region where lesus performed miracles, taught crowds, and entrusted His mission to them.

For us, "Galilee" represents the spaces where we live and serve - our homes, workplaces, and communities. Easter Monday encourages us to find Christ in 'our Galilee' in the everyday moments of life, recognizing His presence in the ordinary as well as the extraordinary.

It encourages us to renew our commitment to living out the resurrection. This involves acts of kindness, compassion, and justice, leaving our comfort zones and to step out into the world, carrying the message of hope, forgiveness, and grace.

Let us meet Jesus in "our Galilee", in the spaces where we live, love, and serve and carry forward the light of His Resurrection, Hope and Mission.

> on a war footing, making it a priority to redress this distressing stray dog crisis in Goa.

> > **Aires Rodrigues, London**

#### Gone but not forgotten

Though Shakuntala Devi was universally known for her mathematical genius, and her astrological prowess, her multifaceted personality went unnoticed because of her legendary status in these fields. Like many great persons, she rose from a humble beginning that must have inculcated in her a sense of determination to accept challenges and solve problems.

In her innumerable interactions with people, Shakuntala Devi used to say that believing in oneself was the key to understand mathematics which, she said, was mere numbers.

Though she was criticised by some sections for taking to astrology on a big scale, Shakuntala Devi brushed all cynics by saying "astrology and maths are analogous"

Well, even some twelve years after her death on April 21, 2013, the genius' life will continue to be an inspiration to young mathematicians.

Ganapathi Bhat, Akola

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**Release sterilised stray** 

dogs in secluded places

In yet another disturbing inci-

dent, as a result of the growing

stray dog menace, a 20-month-

old toddler was reportedly

mauled by a pack of stray dogs at

Talem, Durgabhat in Ponda early

Friday morning. It must be said

that dog attacks are not confined

only to little children. Even fully

grown adults have become vic-

tims of such attacks, especially

on the beaches. The only differ-

ence is that in children such at-

tacks can end in fatality. The au-

thorities concerned are carrying

out vaccination and sterilization

programs. However it must be

said that vaccination does not

make a stray dog less aggressive.

It appears that sterilisation is

not having the desired effect as the

number of stray dogs is increas-

ing by leaps and bounds. Animal

lovers are criticised for feeding

stray dogs. However if these dogs

are hungry they are most likely to

attack humans. In India, there is a

ban on killing stray dogs, and mu-

nicipalities are prohibited from us-

ing lethal methods to control their

population. In Goa, there is a ban

on the sale, breeding and import

of ferocious dog breeds such as Pit

Bull and Rottweiler. However, even

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nook and corner. Even city roads and the villages too are infested with stray dogs. Our own Ribandar itself has hundreds of these. This stray dog menace across Goa is alarming with adults and children being attacked as they go about their business. The beaches too are infested with rabid dogs. The situation now is very concerning and disturbing.

Pet animals are an asset to society. It is also true that animals are required to be protected from unnecessary pain and suffering. As love and compassion for animals is growing, there is also a need and necessity to consider the seriousness of the stray dog menace in a very dispassionate manner and not being influenced by any emotional issues. Over the years' crores have

been spent on the stray dog menace but it has just been getting shoddier. The so-called sterilisation programme has not worked. Sterilisation alone could never be the only solution to this grave and alarming crisis of stray dogs. It is high time that the authorities address this worrisome situation

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stray dogs can be as dangerous. E blamed for the increase of stray The only difference is that stray dogs attack only when in packs while high breed dogs attack even when they are alone. It is seen that after sterilisation, the strav dogs are released in the same locality and they come together again to form a pack. Once sterilised, it would be prudent to release these dogs separately in different localities and even in secluded areas instead of releasing them back in the cities and villages.

Adelmo Fernandes, Vasco

## Keep population of strays under control

Just a few days ago, a toddler was mauled by stray dogs. Imagine the terror the child might have experienced. As per the O Heraldo report, January itself had 1,789 cases that made an average of 57 cases per day. These dogs are a real hazard to people. Some so called dog lovers feed them by the roadside thereby encouraging the canines to come more often for a feed.

sition is that the stray dogs in Goa These dog lovers are also to be are multiplying by the day in every

population. If you care so much for strays, then maybe adopt some or volunteer to sterilise them. In countries like Oman,

forget dogs you won't find a single stray cat loitering around in any park. The rules have been strict enough for years now. In our small state of Goa, we can't eliminate them but atleast make a constant effort to limit having strays. As of now, it is made compulsory by the shelter homes to sterilise pets you adopt to avoid

mating with strays. The govt also

claims that they have launched

many drives for sterilisation and

vaccination but then why does

the problem persist, that too for

years? Should we just assume it

was all ineffective? Nothing is im-

Monaliza D'Costa, Curchorem

Yet another victim. Very sadly, this

time a little toddler. The factual po-

possible, if we try hard enough.

Stray dog menace

in Goa is alarming

letters<mark>to</mark>the<mark>editor</mark> 쑳

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